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HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY IN THE HIGHER SCHOOLS OF GERMANY

II¹

The programme for the second part of the work in history and geography is as follows:

QUARTA: 4 hours. (*a*) Geography of the Balkan peninsula, the Carpathian countries and Asia, particularly Asia Minor; Grecian history to 146 B. C. (*b*) Geography of Italy, Spain, France and Africa, especially northern Africa; Roman history to 476 A. D.

UNTERTERTIA: 3 hours. (*a*) Geography of central Europe with special reference to physical characteristics and political history; German history to 1096 A. D. (*b*) German history from 1096 to 1555; outlines of American Geography in connection with the history of discovery.

OBERTERTIA: 3 hours. (*a*) Modern history from 1555 to 1700; the geography of Great Britain, the Scandinavian Peninsula, Denmark, France and Russia; review of European geography. (*b*) Modern history from 1700 to 1815 and from 1864 to 1871; geography of America and Australia and of the German Colonies.

The most important deviation from the Prussian course that appears in the Jena *Lehrplan* is in the amount of time devoted to the history of Greece and Rome. The Prussian plan, as has been stated, gives but two years to this work—one in *Quarta*, when the pupils are but twelve years old, which covers the whole field of classical history in a single year of two lessons per week; the other year is in *Obersecunda* during which all of Greek and Roman history to the fall of the Western Empire is done in three lessons per week. Further than this there is nothing of classical history,

¹ Continued from the May number of THE SCHOOL REVIEW.

not even a review in the last year of the course. The Prussian *Lehrplan*, as has been previously mentioned, has been arranged with a view to the practical needs of those who leave school at the end of a six years' course (about 40 per cent. of the entire number); and it has been considered especially desirable, therefore, that they should take with them a well-rounded training in the language, literature and history of Germany, and in religion. Hence the Grecian history formerly taught in *Untersecunda* has given way to an additional year of modern history. Few other German states have adopted the Prussian plan to this extent. There are undoubtedly certain practical advantages connected with it, both in the emphasis placed on modern history and in the division of the work made for the benefit of those who do not intend to complete the school course. Still the classical schools feel that in the time allowed it is impossible to teach Greek and Roman history satisfactorily. From a pedagogical standpoint there is no doubt that the Jena plan, which is the one generally followed in the other German states, has superior advantages for the classical schools. Although the second part of the course is completed with *Obertertia*, it provides for a more intensive course in the upper classes, one half of which is devoted to the history of Greece and Rome.

The work of *Quarta* begins with a review of the most important Greek legends. Nearly all schools give a year to the mythology of Greece and Rome—in Prussia, *Quinta*, and in other states generally, *Sexta*. In Jena, however, the work is confined for the most part to stories from the Odyssey which also form a part of the German reading course. The wanderings of Ulysses demand a careful study of the geography of Grecian lands. Maps are drawn of the Balkan peninsula and Asia Minor; the islands of the Ægean are located; and the classic routes of travel compared with those of modern times. Then follows an outline history of the political events in Greece between 1104 and 500 B.C. together with the necessary changes in the geographical divisions. The study of the Persian wars bring in the geography of Asia and Egypt, and the biographies

of Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius and Pericles. The account of the Peloponnesian War is accompanied with a study of the geography of Sicily. Then follows a narrative of the events clustering about the lives of Socrates, Agesilaus, Epaminondas and Pelopidas, Demosthenes and Philip of Macedon. The story of Alexander the Great, the division of his empire and its subsequent subjugation to Rome completes the historical course in Grecian history, and also furnishes an opportunity for a review of the geography of southwestern Asia. The work of the second semester is Roman history and a study of the geography, ancient and modern, of the countries included in the Roman Empire. The class at the same time that it is studying the history of Greece and Rome has the geography of Palestine in connection with religion, and is reading in German the Theban legends, stories from Greek history, Schiller's *Cranes of Ibycus*, stories from Roman history and travelers' descriptions of Italy and Athens.

In *Untersecunda* the history of the Holy Roman Empire is traced down to the year 1555. So far as possible the social and political changes are treated with reference to the fortunes of the city of Jena, which lies at the crossing of the two great highways contended for both by the Germans and the Slavs. Within sight of the town are a dozen castles and strongholds each of which has a story to tell of the struggles of these races for supremacy. The history of the city church and cloister, of the city hall (*Rathaus*) and of the market, dates from early times and illustrates the gradual development of local self-government. The founding of the university and its later history afford a natural means of introducing the study of the Reformation. The political and physical geography of central Europe afford important contributions for the understanding of the course in mediaeval history. The period of discovery brings in America, south Africa and Asia.

In *Obertertia* the chief events of modern history from 1555 to the present time are considered. It is the period of colonization in which England takes a leading part. Queen Elizabeth

is portrayed, and the geography of Great Britain is studied. The Thirty Years' War brings in Sweden and Denmark under the hero Gustavus Adolphus. The French influence in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries necessitates a study of the history of France as it centers in the career of Louis XIV. Russia, as represented by Peter the Great, is given some attention. The second semester is devoted to the history of the eighteenth century and the culmination of events in the overthrow of Napoleon, and in the final restoration of the German Empire. A study of the German colonial possessions, and of those countries enriched by German immigration, gives ample opportunity for a review of the geography of the world. During this year the class reads in German selections from Schiller's *History of the Thirty Years' War* and from his *Wilhelm Tell* both of which are sidelights on the work in history.

There has been much discussion concerning the best methods of teaching history in the middle and upper grades. Teachers have pointed out the defects of the narrative method and maintained that thereby scholars attain no power of independent investigation; that even the faculty of discriminative judgment is not properly cultivated; and that few pupils ever acquire a love for historical reading. Professor Schiller, of Giessen, a noted writer on gymnasial pedagogics, still holds that it is highly desirable to assign readings to be done out of school and to devote the lesson period to a discussion of the topic. The Prussian regulations, however, distinctly prohibit the general adoption of this method because of the restrictions it places upon the free time of the pupils. From twenty minutes to half an hour a day is all that a teacher has a right to expect of his pupils by way of home study, and this is hardly sufficient for the correction of notes and the making of such maps as are necessary in class work. In fact there is but one method possible for the German teacher. He must himself narrate the stories, make outlines and do the reviewing in the class.

The method of presentation in the middle grades does not differ materially from that already described in the lower grades.

First there is a review of the important events of past lessons; then the telling of the new story and its oral reproduction by the class according to the outline which the teacher has developed and placed upon the board. Text-books are commonly used, of which there are many excellent varieties. They are, however, mere outlines which by no means usurp the function of the teacher. They are handbooks for consultation in review and for fixing lessons already elaborated in the class. A text-book that presumes to give a complete account of the historical development of the period studied would be worse than useless to the pupil. He would not have time to do the required reading, to say nothing of sorting out the important facts. For pupils' use a concise reference book rather than a text-book is required.

The Jena programme for the final course is as follows:

UNTERSECUNDA: 3 hours. (a) Review and continuation of Grecian history down to 338 B. C., with reference to the ancient geography of Greece and Asia Minor. (b) Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Empire down to its subjugation by Rome, together with a geographical review; then a review of Roman history to 133 B. C., and of the geography of ancient Italy. Geographical reviews of Asia and Africa.

OBERSECUNDA: 3 hours. (a) Roman history from 133 B. C. to 375 A. D. (b) Mediæval history to 1056 A. D. Geographical reviews. Review of important dates in the world's history.

UNTERPRIMA: 3 hours. (a) History of the period from 1056 to 1555. (b) Modern history from 1555 to 1786. Geographical reviews.

OBERPRIMA: 3 hours. (a) Modern history from 1786 to 1888 with special attention to geography. Comprehensive résumé of the historical development of modern civilization.

The methods to be followed in the upper classes do not differ essentially from those already outlined. The pupils are more mature; they have read more extensively from both classical and modern authors and have greater power in abstract

thought. Nevertheless the same general plan of presentation must be followed as in the lower classes, the only difference being that less effort is required to make the work interesting, and more attention can be given to the relations of cause and effect. In fact this final course does not cover much more ground than the one just finished; but it is treated in a more general way, and the causes of political changes are emphasized to the exclusion, in a degree, of the descriptive work which characterizes the earlier course. The pupils already know the more important facts; the main thing now is to search out the reasons for their being. In *Untersecunda*, while the history of Greece and Rome is being studied, the class work in religion is concerned with the apostolic history and the founding of the Christian church. In Greek, Xenophon's *Anabasis* and selections from the *Odyssey* are being read, and the connection is maintained throughout the following year by readings from Herodotus. Early Roman history is supplemented by reading Cicero's *de imp. Cn. Pompei* (alternating with *pro Roscio*), Virgil's *Æneid* Books I–III and selections from Livy, Books I, II, III, V, VI, VII, and IX.

In connection with later Roman and mediæval history to 1056 the *Obersecunda* class reads in Latin several books of Virgil and selections from Livy, Books XXI, XXII, XXV, XXVI, XXVII and XXX. The work in religion is confined to the apostolic period of the church and the mission of Paul, which afford excellent opportunity for bringing together important facts in history and geography.

In *Prima* the course in religion develops the history of the church through the Reformation down to modern times. The class by the study of *Nibelungenlied* in the original text and the middle high German literature, which is a part of the work in *Obersecunda*, is now ready to read the *Germania* of Tacitus. And with this course the climax of interest in German antiquities is reached. The gulf between the present and the past is effectually bridged over; the German school boy henceforth feels that ancient history is very real.

The course as outlined for the Jena *Gymnasium* is perhaps the best illustration of recent attempts to correlate the instruction in the humanistic subjects in the secondary school curriculum. The Prussian *Lehrplan* is by no means so carefully adjusted in this respect; nevertheless it would be difficult to devise a curriculum for the German schools, considering the available material, in which one subject did not bear some relation to the other subjects of the course. In Jena there is not only the external correlation, but there is an even more serious attempt to make the instruction of the class room effective in more directions than one. The Jena curriculum as it now stands is the result of many years of study on the part of a large number of schoolmasters. In this work, as has been said, Dr. Frick was the leader and the Jena curriculum is today perhaps the best example of the fruit of his work and the labor of his colleagues.

In conclusion, I find it difficult to estimate the worth of the German methods of teaching history. The geographical instruction has always seemed to me most excellent, but there is room for wide differences of opinion with regard to the work in history. In certain schools which I could mention the work is undoubtedly of a high order; the scholars are deeply interested and the results are eminently satisfactory. Still it must be remembered that in many schools—I fear in the great majority of them—the work is purely formal and disconnected, unrelated, and exceedingly uninteresting. The successful teacher, according to the German method, must be an able storyteller and have the power to stir the emotions of his pupils by the narration of historic events. He must be enthusiastic and possessed of encyclopædic information. When these conditions are not fulfilled there is a dry recital of events which is followed by a still drier recitation by the pupils. A few facts may be learned, but so long as they are not related to other facts they are lifeless. I confess to having heard lessons—many of them—which were soporific in the extreme, and so unusual was it in my experience to find a good teacher of history that I often despaired of seeing the German system at its best. Teachers continually complained

to me by way of excuse for a poor showing that no time was allowed for outside study, and that with only two or three lessons a week it was impossible to get good results when everything depended upon the teacher in the class.

On the whole I was greatly disappointed in the practical working of the German methods. Comparatively few teachers, it seems to me, have the ability or the disposition to treat the subject in the only way that can bring success. Germans are not natural storytellers; as a rule they are too phlegmatic. Success for the average teacher, therefore, depends upon his ability to systematize and arrange his material in such a way that at the end of the course the pupil has a definite, closely related body of knowledge. Lack of interest on the part of some and lack of methodical arrangement are, it seems to me, the two great factors which account for the unsatisfactory results in the teaching of history in the secondary schools.

It is still a fact, however, after all is said that the German students who do their work at all satisfactorily generally have upon the completion of their course a very comprehensive view of the world's history. They are familiar with the chief events in history from the Trojan war to the accession of William II.; they have traced the development of political geography for some three thousand years up to the present; they know the topography of the countries in which the great historical scenes have been enacted; they know something of the physical conditions which have determined the economic characteristics of various nations; they have been led to notice the changes that have taken place in historical times in the relations of the industrial life to the family, of the family to the community, and of the community to the state. Finally, the influence of art and literature upon the development of civilization is tolerably clear in their minds. They may be deficient in the ability to make independent historical investigations, or even be unable to read intelligibly certain historical works of a technical nature, but they have nevertheless what may be called a historical instinct. They may not be able to account for the faith that is in them but

they have the faith notwithstanding. Such students when they go up to the university very quickly become acquainted with the methods of doing research work; they easily adapt themselves to circumstances, and become what may be rightfully termed students of history. It should be understood, however, that the patient industry, the dispassionate judgment and breadth of scholarship that are exhibited by the typical German historians, can scarcely be credited to the study of history in the secondary schools. I am disposed to believe that the courses in Greek and Latin, in German and in religion, furnish the muscle and sinew: the historical course builds merely the skeleton.

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